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ABSTRACT

A final report is given of an assessment and comparison series which evaluated the national fitness and sport promotion systems in the United States, Australia, and Canada. The framework of the three country-specific assessments treated national level policies and programs first, followed by state or provincial activities. At each stage, physical fitness and sports were dealt with separately. This report synthesizes the previous assessments, and identifies salient points and recommendations for the United States system. Comparisons are made among the three countries in the areas of administrative structure, resources, types of programs, and transmission of policy. It is noted that, in Canada and Australia, physical fitness aims are pursued within the context of a broad recreational orientation, while in the United States, much fitness promotion is done in a preventive health context. The primary observation about sports policy and promotion is that both Canada and Australia allocate substantial amounts of money to promotion of both professional and amateur sports, in contrast to the United States, where virtually no direct financial support is given to these sports. Nine specific recommendations are made for strengthening the United States system. (JD)

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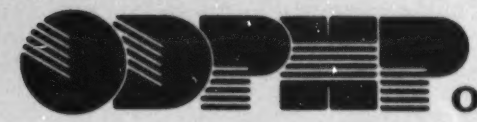

Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

FINAL REPORT
A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS PROMOTION AND DELIVERY IN THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, AND AUSTRALIA

REPORT NO. 8

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Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Department of Health and Human Services
February 23, 1982

This report is made pursuant to Modification 11 of Contract No. 282-78-0183-DN. The person employed by the contractor with management and professional responsibility for the content of the report is Robert M. Bozzo.

Contractor:

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Health and Human Services Group

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I. INTRODUCTION

This final report is made pursuant to Article IV, Paragraph 15d of Modification No. 11 to Contract 282-78-0183-DN. It is the fourth in a series of documents which is intended to provide the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) with a comprehensive assessment and comparison of three national fitness and sport promotion systems.

The series began with a description and commentary regarding the development, and implementation of fitness and sports promotion efforts in the United States. That was followed by Granville's assessment of the Canadian fitness and sports systems. The Canadian assessment was done by means of on-site investigations at the Federal and Provincial levels. Of the ten Canadian provinces, Ontario and Alberta were selected for assessment. Interviews were conducted with representatives of various government agencies and relevant parties outside of government.

Because of perceived cost constraints and the preferences of ODPHP, no site visits were made to assess the Australian system. Instead, telephone contact was made with relevant agencies in the Australian Commonwealth (Federal) government and in the governments of the States of Victoria and New South Wales. Interviews were conducted and documents were solicited.

The framework of the three country-specific assessments treated national level policies and programs first, followed by State or Provincial activities. At each stage of the assessments, physical fitness and sports were dealt with separately. In this report, which synthesizes the previous assessments and identifies salient points and recommendations for the United States system, a similar organization has been employed. The subsequent chapters deal in turn with the national/Federal level in the three countries, subnational jurisdictions, and conclusions and recommendations. In each case, the dichotomy between fitness and sports is maintained.

II. THE NATIONAL LEVEL

FITNESS

Of the several dimensions of the three systems for promoting physical fitness that were observed in this study, the most logical starting point is a comparison of their underlying philosophies.

Canada and Australia appear to be characterized by a broad recreational orientation. Physical fitness aims are pursued with the idea that encouragement of a broad spectrum of leisure time activities will have the widest appeal and the greatest likelihood of success. This orientation is manifested in the national promotional campaigns of ParticipAction and "Life.Be In It" in Canada and Australia respectively. To date, most emphasis in these programs has been on a low key, non-prescriptive approach which brings home the message that activity is good for people, is fun and can be undertaken outside the realm of strenuous and competitive regimens. The recreational context also can be seen in Canadian and Australian attempts to ensure liaison with and between recreation ministers and, in the case of Canada, to provide financial assistance to national recreation organizations.

The United States, without any real policy or unified strategy, can be viewed in contrast to Canada and Australia. Much of the fitness promotion currently supported at the national level in this country is done in a preventive health context. The activities of ODPHP in furthering the Objectives for the Nation for 1990 are the most prominent case in point. Activities undertaken by other Federal agencies or national level bodies have been diverse, to varying degrees falling into the contextual categories of health, recreation, and sports. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS) which is the only Federal or-

ganization specifically charged with responsibility for fitness has opted for a wide ranging philosophical and programmatic approach (including health promotion and disease prevention) which maximizes opportunities for disseminating information and increasing collaborative efforts. Some of the programs endorsed by the President's Council promote fitness in the context of competition and performance while others emphasize fitness for the sake of general well-being. The recent efforts of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) in moving toward implementation of Australia's "Life.Be In It" program represent the most salient and direct national level attempt to promote fitness in a definable non-health, non-prescriptive way.

Administrative Structure

The organizational placement of the agencies responsible for physical fitness in the three countries shows an important difference between Canada and Australia on the one-hand, and the U.S. on the other. In Canada and Australia, there are single Federal agencies which have primary responsibility for promoting fitness and sports. In both cases, the organizations are major sub-agencies of Federal departments. Fitness and sports are handled by parallel units within these agencies. These fitness and sport branches thus have an organizational visibility which seems recognized nationally.

The previous reports of this study describe in detail the structure and activities of Fitness Canada and Sport Canada, and the Sport and Recreation Branch in Australia's Department of Home Affairs and Environment.

As major agencies or branches within Cabinet departments, Canadian and Australian fitness and sports agencies have the opportunity to do intradepartmental lobbying for budget allocations and to win the support of the cabinet Ministers for their programs.

It is important also to note that in Canada and Australia the responsible agencies, their missions and their powers are

based in national legislation. The preceding reports in this study provide details concerning the history of Canada's Fitness and Amateur Sport Act and Australia's National Fitness Act. Based on these laws, agencies and sub-agencies have been created, policy papers have been produced, and program activities have been undertaken. The relevant point in all of this is that the Canadian and Australian governments have given formal recognition to fitness and sports as legitimate national concerns. This recognition has been effected in a manner which separates fitness from the more diverse concerns of health promotion. The formal and distinct recognition, the loose tie to sports, and the above mentioned organizational visiblity combine to elevate fitness above the status it would hold as one of several prevention/health promotion areas. The effect is that fitness retains a large measure of operational autonomy while standing under the conceptual and programmatic umbrella of recreation.

That orientation is a result of the fitness philosophy discussed above which is expressed in the governing legislation and is manifested further in the program content, funding mechanisms, and organizational relationships of the government entities responsible for fitness.

In the United States, the system by which fitness and sports are promoted and programs are planned, funded, and implemented is more diffuse, less fully developed, and less visible than in the Canadian and Australian systems. At first glance, the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports appears similar to its counterparts in Canada and Australia. For example, the Council's specific purview is fitness and sports, it carries the credibility and prestige of the presidency, and its appointed members represent a variety of expertise and contacts. It appears, however, that while the Council has good name recognition throughout the country and maintains substantial credibility, it is not in a position to effect a national policy on fitness or sports. Note that a general observation of this study is that the U.S. lacks a clear and recognizable policy regarding fitness

Except for limited coordinative and promotional efforts by the President's Council, sports policy can be inferred in the negative, i.e., sports is not a concern for the Federal government. The President's Council liaises with amateur sports bodies and some of the programs it co-sponsors promote sports or fitness in a sports context. But most of the Council's activities are directed at fitness promotion. No Federal funding for amateur sports bodies or elite competitions is provided.

The President's Council receives very limited Federal funding. Its staff (about a half dozen professionals) performs a number of liaison and public relations functions and carries out some information dissemination activities. Through these efforts, the Council has sanctioned and facilitated implementation of a number of privately backed programs or events which can be assumed to contribute to the cause of enhancing physical fitness. However, without significant funding and a mechanism for initiating action in pursuit of policy initiatives, the Council must remain restricted largely to an exhortatory role in which actions are taken as opportunities arise.

In addition to the President's Council, the major responsibility for pursuit of fitness policy in the U.S. Federal government is ODPHP. That office has designated fitness/exercise as one of its fifteen prevention areas, thus establishing a health promotion context for fitness (as opposed to a recreation or sports theme). As one of many parts of an overarching health promotion strategy, fitness presents a relatively low profile. In contrast to Canada and Australia, the U.S. system is not characterized by special national legislation, major policy papers, programmatically discrete bureaucratic structures, and active funding mechanisms for fitness. Again, the structure and available resources are such that primary emphasis must be placed on liaison and voluntary cooperation by a number of relevant actors. The President's Council and ODPHP have liaised closely with each other in taking initial steps toward the fitness objectives for 1990.

It is important to note that ODPHP has initiated a process which contains several of the ingredients that would result in a true policy and a unified implementation strategy. The statements of objectives and the careful drafting of implementation plans in collaboration with other agencies provides the formality, consensus, and continuity necessary to move from options to action in a coherent manner. More specifically, this process holds the promise of gaining the advantages of the expertise of the President's Council and others and of gaining access to the Council's many contacts outside of government.

Aside from the President's Council and ODPHP, fitness related efforts are carried out in various contexts by a number of Federal agencies. The Centers for Disease Control, the Department of Education, the Department of Interior and a number of other Federal agencies have conducted fitness related activities. However, fitness and exercise are not dominant themes for them.

In the Department of Interior, the former Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) acted in a liaison capacity with the President's Council and ODPHP and worked to encourage attention for physical fitness in recreation planning. HCRS was disbanded, however, an occurence which interrupted coordination between recreational and health/fitness promotion. This is an example of the diffuse nature of the U.S. system. As such, it differs from the Canadian and Australian systems where fitness, sports and recreation are linked more closely in terms of planning, funding, promotion, and service delivery.

In summary, the administrative structure is such that responsibilities are divided among many actors and the most prominent agencies must rely heavily on persuasion and coordination. The formal issuances or decision making processes that have occurred to date have not established fitness and exercise as matters of national concern in the same sense as that concern has been expressed in Canada and Australia. At the President's Council and ODPHP, there is a lack of resources which, together with exercise's status as just one of many of ODPHP's prevention con-

cerns, is likely to result in low visibility and dispersion of effort.

Resources

The allocation of financial resources to fitness was an important focus of this study. In fact, as the investigation progressed the funding issue grew in importance as differences between the countries in that regard emerged. The specific amounts expended in each country are difficult to document, especially in the U.S. where "gray areas" and problems of how to partition budgets abound. In general, however, it appears that the Canadian and Australian Federal governments spend more on exercise/fitness promotion than does the United States considering the great differences in population size. The important consideration is that in addition to the legislative, conceptual and organizational prominence accorded fitness in Canada and Australia, the responsible Federal agencies have been able to make significant direct interventions in the form of financial contributions. In Canada, these contributions support national promotional activities, relevant national organizations, and fitness related research and monitoring. In Australia, until recently the Commonwealth (Federal) government provided partial funding for the renowned "Life. Be in it" program and earlier supported the construction of leisure facilities. In the U.S., the largest Federal expenditures explicitely related to physical fitness and exercise are made by the National Institutes of Health for biomedical research.

The significance of these direct financial interventions is that policy, once formulated, can be exercised with a demeanor of leadership and focus. Furthermore, the centralized control and dispersal of funds establishes a unity of direction and responsibility which seems lacking in the American system.

Canada provides the heaviest funding for fitness related programs. Fitness Canada's budget for contributions to organizations engaged in fitness-related activities is about $3.9 million. The combined operating budget for Fitness Canada and Sport

Canada was $5,276,000 in the 1979-80 fiscal year. The largest fitness contributions were about $700,000 to ParticipAction for the national mass media campaign and about $140,000 each to the Canadian Alliance for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation and to the Canadian Recreation and Parks Association. Numerous other organizations receive contributions, the smallest of which are in the $5,000-$10,000 range. Fitness Canada does not provide any funds to the Provincial governments or to provincial organizations.

Australia's funding for fitness promotion has been much less than Canada's. The only Commonwealth funding that could be identified was $600,000-$650,000 per year for three years for the "Life.Be in it" program. Some of these funds went to the States which also provided substantial funding of their own. No specific matching requirement was evident, however. A recent Commonwealth action was to eliminate its financial support for "Life.Be in it" after the 1979-80 fiscal period, so that the government now provides no direct support for fitness programs. The decision to discontinue funding was based on the principles of encouraging self help and avoiding duplication of responsibility between levels of government. Note here that "Life.Be in it" began at the State level (in Victoria) after which the Commonwealth facilitated its adoption nationally. Currently, in spite of an earlier decision to continue funding for another three years, the plan is to have national governance of "Life.Be in it" continue under the auspices of a non-government entity similar to a non-profit corporation in the U.S. Full responsibility for implementation will remain with the States and Territories.

As the Commonwealth government's financial support for "Life.Be in it" has been removed, the Department of Health has allocated $500,000 for the development and implementation of a multi-faceted health promotion campaign which includes physical fitness as one of its foci along with nutrition, smoking cessation, stress management, and alcohol abuse control. This program is in its early stages so no determination can be made yet

as to whether the government might ultimately disengage itself once the effort takes root among State level implementors.

In all, the Australian government's policy on direct intervention is conservative. Only non-duplicative endeavors which are clearly of national significance are likely to be supported. As shown later, amateur sports meets these criteria and continues to receive heavy financial backing from the Commonwealth.

Funding for fitness promotion by the United States Federal government is difficult to document with any precision. The budget of the President's Council has fluctuated around $1,000,000 for the last few years. ODPHP's health promotion activities cut across a number of prevention areas. The National Health Information Clearinghouse, the National Health Promotion Media Campagin and other cross-cutting initiatives of ODPHP received a total of $934,000 in FY 1980. Other major cross-cutting programs are the Center for Health Promotion and Education's Health Hazard Appraisal, School Health Curriculum, and other health promotion projects. These efforts by CHPE were funded at about $12 million in FY 1980, but no specific amount within this total could be attributed in this study to exercise and physical fitness. The Office of Comprehensive School Health received no funding for its efforts to develop and promote integrated health education curricula in which fitness is one component. Similarly, funds have not be appropriated to carry out legislation which authorized funding for state councils on fitness. The greatest Federal allocations made specifically for fitness-related efforts were about $4 million in FY 1980 for research sponsored by the National Institutes of Health.

Types of Programs

Some mention has been made already of the different conceptual bases for fitness promotion in the three countries. It was noted that in Canada and Australia primary emphasis is placed on exercise in the recreational context. Mass media campaigns tend to be broad in their appeals for people to be active. Over time

the promotion has moved to a slightly more prescriptive mode, the idea being that a foundation of familiarity and receptivity has been established. The messages all have a humorous, non-threatening slant to them which stays aways from a hard line health orientation. An important point is that high levels of recognition by the audience (over 80 percent) seem to be due in large part to the fact that Particip Action and "Life.Be in it" messages have received a lot of air time during peak viewing hours Lack of play, especially during peak hours, is a problem that has hindered public service advertising in the U.S. The report on the Canadian system discusses ParticipAction's intense marketing efforts and its paying for some of its air time. "Life.Be in it" has had private co-sponsors and has marketed commercially a variety of goods bearing the program logo.

American health and fitness promotional campaigns sponsored by the Federal government, including the President's Council's public service advertising campaign and ODPHP's National Health Promotion Media Campaign, have been funded less heavily, marketed less intensively, and completely dependent on donated air time. An observation of the investigators in this study is that they also have been less enjoyable and engaging than the Canadian and Australian advertisements.

A significant element of the Canadian program which has no counterpart in the U.S. or Australia is the Canada Fitness Survey which provides discrete and detailed monitoring of the fitness status of the population, including direct testing of the fitness status of respondents. In the U.S., the Health Interview Survey (HIS) and the Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (HANES) are conducted periodically by the National Center for Health Statistics. To date HIS and HANES have not provided sufficiently detailed or routinely collected measures of fitness levels, attitudes, and behaviors to provide comprehensive baseline and trend data. However, NCHS has cooperated with ODPHP in producing a prevention profile which highlights the extent to which Americans engage in behaviors associated with healthy living or ill health.

All three countries have proclaimed the importance of encouraging private sector involvement, particulary in employee fitness programs. It appears that the U.S. is most advanced in this regard, however, through the efforts of the President's Council and its affiliated membership organization, the American Association of Fitness Directors in Business and Industry (AAFDBI). Fitness Canada has funded demonstration and research projects in employee fitness, but does not seem to have made as concerted an effort to promulgate the idea. As in the case of "Life.Be In It", the Commonwealth government has opted to allow full operational responsibility in this area to devolve to the States. Under this arrangement, Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, and the Australian Capital Territory are developing approaches to foster fitness programs in the workplace.

Transmission of Policy

A major finding of this study is that fitness promotion in the U.S. lacks a formal and highly visible policy, as well as a good means of bringing about consensus and action among others, be they State governments or relevant associations. The earlier report on the U.S. described the lack of financial incentives for relevant parties at the state and local levels to undertake fitness-related promotional and program initiatives.

The Canadian system has provided some of these incentives through Fitness Canada's contributions program which provides support for organizational operations, special projects, and research. As noted earlier, no funds are given to the Provinces or provincial groups. This arrangement reflects the always delicate nature of Canadian Federal-Provincial relationships and the generally strong political position of the Provinces.

Both Canada and Australia have facilitated the transmission of policy through a hierarchy of coordinating committees. These begin with a council of the relevant cabinet ministers from the Federal/Commonwealth government and the Provinces/States and extend to working committees of senior bureaucrats. These commit-

tees meet at regular intervals to review and adjust policy directions, share information and divide responsibilities. Australia has made a point of encouraging State specialization and leadership to maximize the effective use of limited resources. The national-Provincial/State conference system is used to effect consultation in various program areas besides fitness.

Two factors characterize the Canadian and Australian systems and facilitate transmission of policy, the taking of initatives at the Provincial/State level, and collaboration among jurisdictions. These factors are the small number of Provinces or States (ten in Canada and six in Australia) and their considerable fiscal autonomy which derives from their receipt of large shares of total national tax revenues. Comparison can be made with the U.S. with fifty states and a tax system in which the lion's share of total income tax revenue goes to the Federal government. In the U.S. system, the States have become dependent on Federal funding for most social programs. The aforementioned lack of a formal national policy and lack of resources for direct intervention/financial incentives thus would seem to create a vacuum of action and accountability.

SPORTS

Examination of how the three countries deal with the promotion of amateur sports was undertaken as a complement to the fitness investigation. Because it is of secondary importance in the study, sports is treated here more briefly than fitness. For detailed accounts, readers are referred to the three country specific reports.

The primary observation about sports policy and promotion is that both Canada and Australia have given much formal consideration to the appropriateness of sports as a matter of national policy. Both countries have decided in the affirmative and both have allocated substantial amounts of money to sports programs. This contrasts sharply with the U.S. where virtually no direct financial support is given to sports by the Federal government.

The Canadian and Australian administrative structures are markedly similar. Australia's system is still only partially developed, but progress to date and plans for the future mirror closely the major features of Canada's system. In both cases, the Federal government has assembled study groups and issued policy papers on the role it should play with respect to sports. These papers have expressed the idea that sports is linked conceptually with recreation/leisure and that support should be given to the creation of opportunities for citizens to participate and develop their abilities at all levels of skill, including elite competition. Another factor is the desire of the governments and the various sport organizations to field internationally competitive elite teams. Doing so would reverse the national discomfort associated with poor showings in international events in recent years.

Sport Canada and Australia's Recreation and Sport Branch thus have been empowered and funded to provide financial support for national class elite athletes, national sport organizations, training and accreditation of coaches, development of major sports facilities, and financial assistance for Commonwealth and Olympic games. The Canadian government helped establish and provides funds for the operation of the National Sport and Recreation Centre (NSRC) which is non-government umbrella agency which in turn provides facilities and various administrative supports for national sport bodies.

Australia recently created the Australian Institute of Sports which is to provide elite athletes with top class coaching, training facilities, sports science and sports medicine back up, and career education opportunities. In this action, the Australians have moved ahead of the Canadians where proposals have been put forth for a National House of Sport. However, Australians have not yet acted on a long standing call for creation of a centralized NSRC type organization.

The funding for these sports pursuits noted earlier as being substantial totals about $21.7 million dollars per year for

Sports Canada and about $2.9 million for the sports side of Australia's Recreation and Sports Branch. Australia also has allocated $10 million to the State of Queensland for construction of facilities in connection with the 1982 Commonwealth Games it is hosting in Brisbane.

Regarding the transmission of sport policy downward to subnational governments and organizations, Canada and Australia have been able to define neatly the purview of the Federal government. The distinctions involved in doing so include identification of national and world class athletes, national organizations and national and international events. Those elements of sport not identified as national in scope and importance devolve fully to the Provinces/States. As discussed more fully in the next chapter, the Provinces and (Australian) States are bona fide implementors who operate in a way that is autonomous and generally parallel to the organizational structures and programmatic approaches at the national level.

A major observation expressed in the preceding country specific reports concerns the distinction between elite sports and mass participation sports. The decisions by Canada and Australia that sport is important appear to have been influenced greatly by their aforementioned concern for competing respectably in international events. Accordingly, the major share of funding for sport has gone to support elite events and the relatively small number of athletes involved in them. As an answer to any expressed or potential criticism of this tack, the case has been made that elite competition is simply a logical extension of sports at lower levels of skill and achievement. Support for sports at the elite level is said to be beneficial to the national pride and in terms of inspiring others to participate. Conversely, support for general participation sports is said to increase the size of the pool from which elite athletes may emerge. Thus, backing for all levels of participation is avowed and supported to some extent. The discrepancy between the evenhanded conceptual schema and the greater allocation of funds

for elite sports is defended by the amateur sport lobbies and some government officials. However, it seems open to serious question, notwithstanding the contention that elite sport is simply a much more expensive proposition than "sports for all" type activities.

The report on the U.S. system noted the generally positive predisposition of many people toward sports. Non-elite sports constitute a structured environment (teams, rules, scheduled competitions, etc.) at the recreation/leisure end of the physical activity spectrum which thus can be seen as an important part of the delivery system for fitness related activities. Canada and Australia seem to have recognized this conceptually, but in practice seem to have opted for a sort of "top down" approach to sports, the benefits of which may or may not filter down efficiently to the general public.

The U.S. system contrasts with the Canadian and Australian approach, not so much in its support for non-elite sports as in the absence of direct government support for elite athletes and competitive events. Many top class athletes in this country develop their skills and are supported in college and university sports programs. Beyond that, the elite sports system is the purview of the U.S. Olympic Committee and the various sports governing bodies which obtain funding from private sources.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

With respect to both fitness and sports, Canada was found to have the most fully developed system at the Federal level. This refers to the existence of a specific legislative foundation for government initiatives, a formal and ongoing process of policy development, an imaginative and visible mass media campaign, organizational prominence of fitness and sports entities, and financial and consultative mechanisms for transmitting policy to national and subnational implementors. It is important to note that the strength of the link between the national pride and

Canadian performance in international sports has created a powerful political and financial lever for the amateur sport lobby. Much of the attention given to fitness has come about as a means of making decisions to provide heavy funding for sports more politically palatable.

Australia's approach to fitness promotion is less fully developed in practice and less activist in orientation than that found in the Canadian system. The Commonwealth government has eschewed the notion of heavy and continued funding of fitness promotion. It defers to the States for the development and testing of initiatives, but actively pursues an ongoing program of consultation with them through the Recreation Ministers Council. Information sharing and division of lead responsibilities is thus facilitated even in the absence of a fully institutionalized system of providing financial incentives.

In the sports area, those who accept the notions that sports is a matter of international interest and that elite sports is at the top of the (conceptual) "recreational pyramid" will applaud the Commonwealth's heavy support for sports development. Those who would argue for a total or even a relatively heavy allocation of funds to non-elite sports and general recreation will be disappointed. In general, it is worth noting that much of the Australian sports system appears to have formed from the same mold used to shape the Canadian system.

Those who consider physical fitness as an critical element in attempts to improve the nation's health status and decrease health care costs might fault the U.S. system for allocating very limited resources for the promotion of fitness and the promulgation of related programs. The system also can be seen as having suffered from the lack of a formal policy development process, an inadequately implemented national promotion campaign, and most of all from the lack of an effective and unified means for transmitting initiatives to other actors at national and subnational levels. As noted before, recent attempts to structure and coordinate fitness promotion have taken place in a preventive

health context. Open to question are the relative merits of the U.S.'s integrated, but relatively unobtrusive approach to fitness which is aimed at enhancing health status and the more visible and conceptually discrete recreation based approach of Canada and Australia. Conceptual preferences and tentative judgments of program efficacy aside, the prospects for the U.S. in promoting fitness would seem to be unavoidably crippled in a system in which responsibility is diffused and lightly funded at the national level. This is an especially inhibiting factor when viewed against the backdrop of a federal system in which most states are unused to and not financially capable of undertaking new social initiatives without substantial assistance from the Federal government. In the fitness and health promotion areas, it seems safe to say that large amounts of Federal and State funds for such direct interventions are not likely to be forthcoming in the near future. Unclear at this point is the extent to which these problems can be overcome through intensified efforts by ODPHP and the President's Council to act in a coordinative role and to effect the involvement of relevant parties outside of government.

As noted in the report on the U.S. system, there are numerous private sector parties who have become interested in fitness in the last few years. These include employers, insurors, and enterpreneurs. Some elements of the general public have been quite receptive to the fitness theme and the trend shows every sign of continuing. Given the structure of the U.S. system as described in this study and the current climate of government fiscal restraint, it would seem that the best prospects for success lie in efforts to marshall and coordinate various non-Federal resources.

III. STATE AND PROVINCIAL LEVEL

This chapter summarizes the findings and observations of the three previous reports as they relate to the roles of subnational jurisdictions in the development and promotion of fitness and sports. Specifically, the American States of California, Georgia, and Ohio; the Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Alberta; and the Australian States of Victoria and New South Wales were investigated to determine their roles in the development and promotion of fitness and sports.

FITNESS

Regarding the philosophy or conceptual orientation of the States and Provinces in the three countries, the major observation is that these subnational jurisdictions reflect the thinking and the organizational structures at the national level. The Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Alberta were found to share the recreation/leisure activity orientation of Fitness Canada whereby exercise is promoted primarily as a positive and enjoyable aspect of leisure activity and only secondarily as a means of enhancing health. This orientation is the first element of a pattern of strict organizational and bureaucratic parallelism between the Federal and Provincial governments in both the fitness and sports areas.

The fitness philosophy of the Australian States has been rooted in the idea that the best approach is one which appeals to the widest possible audience in a non-threatening way. This orientation originated in the State of Victoria in the form of the "Life.Be In It" program. The approach was formulated on the basis of a study of public attitudes which found most people disinclined to respond to a fitness message unless it was presented in the context of enjoyment. Increases in the prescriptiveness and

health orientation of the program's messages have been advocated recently in Victoria and New South Wales, but only after a foundation of public awareness and recognition was firmly established.

The other major observation about the philosophy of the Australian States is that the close tie between fitness, recreation, and sports was made in the original enabling legislation - the National Fitness Act of 1941. In the framework of that Act and the resulting bureaucratic structures, the Victoria and New South Wales governments acted independently in instituting a formal policy development process. In that process, fitness was linked with sports as part of a conceptual pyramid of recreation. Elite sports with their structured format and small number of participants forms the top of the pyramid; unstructured, active recreation with many participants forms the bottom. Promotion is done in the "Life.Be In It" context, while the delivery system, with support for competitive sports, elite athletes, training of coaches, and sports facilities, is tilted sharply toward sports.

The fitness philosophy of the States examined in the U.S. study is more difficult to describe succinctly. In each State there is a division of responsibilities and a corresponding variety of conceptual and programmatic orientations. For example, State departments of education and health and special commissions/Governor's Councils on fitness all have a hand in promoting fitness as it relates to their primary audience or area of program responsibility. Fitness councils tend to have the most comprehensive objectives, but they have no obvious constituency or natural delivery system.

Administrative Structure

The organizations primarily responsible for promoting fitness in the Canadian Provinces and the Australian States are discrete subunits of recreation-oriented agencies. In that respect, they resemble the organizational structures in the Canadian and Australian national governments.

In each case, the Provincial/State agency has as its main constituencies municipal governments and provincial, or state level agencies and associations outside of government.

Typically, there is a departmental field staff which interfaces directly with muncipalities to provide technical assistance and to act as a channel of communication with the unit responsible for fitness. The strength of the ties between the Provincial and State agencies and these constituent entities is based on the financial support that is disbursed to the muncipalities, associations, and others. The funding agencies provide support for administration and program activities. They also join in the development of program initiatives and perform or support capacity building efforts. Capacity building may include leadership training courses, technical assistance materials, or the provision of consultation either directly or through other grantees, some of which may serve (as in Alberta) as regional resource centers.

In all cases, the Provincial/State agencies act with a great deal of autonomy from the national government. The Canadian Provinces receive no funding from the Federal government and thus are not accountable to it. The Australian States may receive Commonwealth funding, although none is being provided at the moment. In both countries, however, the autonomy of the subnational jurisdictions stems largely from the fact that they generate large amounts of funds on their own. This is in contrast to the American States which depend more heavily on Federal funding.

In the American States, there is little evidence of an institutionalized relationship between State agencies responsible for fitness promotion and local governments or community groups. Only in cases where State agencies received funding through the Health Education, Risk Reduction program of the Centers for Disease Control was there a clear line of funding and accountability. Even in those instances, the relationship cannot be considered to be institutionalized in the same ongoing sense as in Canada and Australia. Recall also that the CDC program is multi-

faceted, with the amount of attention devoted to fitness varying from case to case.

Governors' Councils tend to be lightly funded and largely dependent on the willingness of others to cooperate and provide resources in much the same fashion as the President's Council at the national level. The Governors' Councils do, however, provide a useful focal point for convening key actors, including those outside of government. Additional information about Governors' Councils is provided in the Final Report of an earlier study performed under this contract.

Resources

It was noted earlier that the Canadian Provinces and the Australian States control a relatively large share of public monies. The most recent annual budgets of the agencies primarily responsible for fitness show the following approximate amounts going to fitness initiatives:

	Total	Amount Per Capita
• Canada		
Fitness Ontario	$1,400,000	$ .17
Alberta Recreational and Parks (fitness section)	$306,000	$ .16
• Australia		
Victorian Department of Youth, Sports and Recreation	$242,000	$ .06
New South Wales Department of Sports and Recreation	$154,000	$ .03

It should be noted that the Provinces/States provided substantial levels of additional financial support for municipalities and provincial or state recreation and sports associations. For example, the State of Victoria spends over $3,000,000 per

year on recreation and about $4,000,000 on sports. The proportion of these additional funds that can be considered fitness-related distinct from sports and general recreation could not be determined in this study. The amounts shown above for the two Australian States are for "Life.Be In It" activities. Some of these funds are used to make small grants to local governments and other groups in support of special "Life.Be In It" events. Through the 1979-80 fiscal year period, these funds included supplemental Commonwealth funding for "Life.Be In It".

The manner in which all categories of funds typically are disbursed to the community level is through an application process, usually annual, which requires that prospective grantees meet a series of criteria. These usually revolve around organizational type, allowable uses of funds, and matching requirements.

The resources devoted to fitness by the three American States examined in this assessment are relatively few. The CDC's $10,000,000 Health Education/Risk Reduction Grant program was found to be the major mechanism for making public funds available for fitness promotion in the states. It must be noted though, that even in that program exercise promotion is only a small component. Even in California, which evidenced a high degree of official concern for fitness, the largest amount of funds in support of fitness was $400,000 to the California Governors' Council on Wellness and Physical Fitness to design, implement, and evaluate two model fitness programs in the worksite. It was one of the most notable and directly fitness-related endeavors encountered in the American States.

Typically, States provide little or no funding for Governors' Councils. California, where the Governor's Council receives funds from several State agencies, appears exceptional in this regard. Neither do other State agencies such as Departments of Health and Education allocate substantial amounts of money for fitness. Their efforts might include making fitness part of a State Health Plan, endorsing special events sponsored by other

organizations, developing fitness-oriented guidelines for school physical education, and developing promotional materials. Because these activities are not programmatically discrete, it is not possible to determine what level of resources goes to fitness-related efforts. Suffice it is to say that fitness initiatives often are undertaken on the strength of the special concern and perservcrence of parties whose primary responsibilities transcend or simply do not include fitness. However, lack of resources and guiding policies would seem unavoidably to render even energetic efforts tenuous and piecemeal.

A final observation about the resources available to subnational jurisdictions is that the Canadian Provinces and Australian States have access to special, non-tax funds. In Canada, many fitness activities are financed by the proceeds of public lotteries. The former national lottery "Loto Canada" recently was disbanded and turned over to the Provinces. The amount of money from this source can be significant, e.g., Fitness Ontario's receipt last year of $450,000 in "Wintario" proceeds. Both Ontario and Alberta use lottery money for some of their grants to local implementors.

Alberta also has the benefit of special monies from its Heritage Fund which consists of funds set aside by the Province from revenues accruing from oil and gas exploration. None of these funds support fitness promotion, but several million dollars per year are allocated for medical research, some of it fitness related.

Australian States have benefitted from the availability of funds coming from the proceeds of racecourse betting. In the State of Victoria, a branch of the Department of Youth, Sport, and Recreation has oversight responsibilities for racing and the so-called TAB receipts. These receipts provide the major share of the Department's funding. Use of these funds is reserved for grants to municipalities and community groups.

Types of Programs

Taking the Canadian system first, the Provinces exercise a largely facilitative role. That is, they provide funds and training to local and regional implementors. Direct program activities include testing and awards programs and fitness clinics such as those conducted by Alberta Recreation and Parks. A major emphasis of Ontario's program is to promote the creation of employee fitness programs. Fitness Ontario has pursued this theme through a survey of 1000 companies regarding current practices, development and promulgation of an implementation guidebook, and provision of financial incentives to companies. Alberta has recently expressed interest in employee fitness and accordingly has requested funds to provide several matching grants to companies to spur program development.

Monitoring also is a concern of the Provinces. In addition to the eventual availability of Province level data from the Canada Fitness Survey, Ontario has conducted a survey of adults on activity levels and factors affecting participation. Alberta has surveyed fitness leaders and members of the public and reviewed program files and relevant agency documents in several communities, some of which had prior exposure to the Shape Up Alberta on-site promotional program.

The Australian States have channeled most of their direct implementation of fitness programs through the "Life.Be In It" program. Much of this implementation consists of special events such as fun runs, walkathons, and Life Games (participatory, not requiring great skill). These take place against the backdrop of the national public service advertising campaign which features the fitness anti-hero Norm.

In other respects, the Australian State programs are much like those of the Canadian Provinces, i.e., funding for facilities, staff, and program activities at the community level.

Program activities in the American States are more diffused and, hence more difficult to categorize. Implementors usually

include health educators in public health departments, those concerned with physical education in schools, and private sector actors such as major employers, YMCA's, and state Blue Cross agencies. Health Educators and school physical education departments increasingly seem to give discrete treatment to the importance of fitness and to appropriate levels and types of exercise. A few states have produced their own brochures and posters for distribution to the public. Others distribute materials developed by national organizations like the President's Council. YMCA's and recreation departments to varying degrees, and mostly on their own initiative, offer fitness/aerobics and leadership training courses, sponsor special public events and run sports programs that might have fitness benefits. State Blue Cross agencies and other insurors may engage in promotional efforts through production and dissemination of exercise brochures and limited mass media advertising. Governors' Councils provide a forum for generating ideas and maintaining coordination, but remain dependent on the willingness and ability of participants to provide financial support or voluntary effort.

Transmission of Fitness Policy

In Canada, the transmission of policy from the national level to the Provinces is accomplished largely through the dialogue that occurs as the Federal government negotiates and renegotiates its purview. The Provinces start with the notion that their prerogatives must be guarded against Federal unsurpation. As Federal responsibilities are agreed upon and bureaucratic structures are put in place, the Provinces tend to create parallel structures which are generally consonant with, but in no way dependent on the Federal government's efforts. Thus, out of a constant concern for maintaining Provincial prerogatives, congruency is achieved and sustained.

Of particular note is the fact (also noted in the preceding chapter) that the Canadian system provides for a formal system of consultation between Federal and Provincial cabinet Ministers.

Below that there are other layers of formal liaison between senior bureaucrats. This mechanism is quite valuable in assuring necessary agreements and exchange of ideas.

Australia's system is similar, although not characterized by the same delicacy of relations between federal and subnational governments. Commonwealth-State consultation is institutionalized. As in the case of the "Life.Be In It" program, transmission may be a two-way process. Australian federalism long has been characterized by the primacy of the States in providing leadership and services. However, the Commonwealth government may provide financial support to the States while encouraging specialization among States along with ongoing consultation.

In both countries, transmission of policy within the Provinces or States is accomplished through the financial supports and technical assistance mentioned in the preceding sections.

In the American States, transmission of policy and programs generally is weak. Institutionalized mechanisms for providing of consultation between levels of government, financial incentives to states and communities, and technical assistance to local providers are few. Those mechanisms that do exist, e.g., the aforementioned Health Education/Risk Reduction Grant Program, tend to be quite broad, treating fitness-related endeavors as optional emphases in multi-faceted approaches.

SPORTS

As in the preceding chapter, discussion of sports policy and programming at the subnational level will be relatively brief. It should be noted, though, that much information was collected about national and Provincial/State sports programs in Canada and Australia. Interested readers are encouraged to refer to the country-specific reports.

The Canadian and Australian sport systems have much in common and stand in contrast to the U.S.. In both of those coun-

tries, Provincial or State governments have decided that sports is a legitimate area of official concern. As a result, they have passed legislation, issued policy papers, and set up organizational structures to carry out the policies.

Sports policy is aimed at providing opportunities for participation and development of sporting potential at all levels. This is the basis for providing financial support for sports associations, municipalities, training and certification of coaches, and training of individual athletes. In both Canada and Australia, these activities parallel those at the national level. Provinces and states are responsible for everything not defined as national in scope and importance. A good example is the hierarchy of "Games" found in Canada. At the national level are the Canada Games in which the Provinces enter teams. Below that level are events such as Western Canada Games, Alberta Games, Ontario Games, and (intra-Provincial) regional games.

A major observation of the assessment is the willingness of governments at all levels to provide heavy financial backing for amateur sports. Provincial and (Australian) State expenditures outstrip those made on behalf of fitness. For example, in the most recent fiscal period, Sport Ontario's budget was about $7,000,000. As noted earlier, Victoria spent about $4,000,000 on sports. This level of support is especially striking in view of the fact that the largest expenditures go to support elite athletes and competitions. These expenditures are accepted and justified on grounds of upholding national, provincial, or State pride, providing a full range of opportunities for personal development, and, by example, encouraging greater participation in sports by the general public.

In the American States, as at the Federal level, governmental structures or public financial supports created to further the development of elite amateur sports were not encountered in this study. To the extent that elite competition is supported financially by the States, it is done so indirectly through the sports programs of State universities and colleges and is not a

distinct subject of public policy. Some sports facilities and programs are supported by local park and recreation departments. Some of the Governor's Councils try to promote broad participation in sports, especially those with fitness benefits which can be pursued in some form by people of all ages. These efforts notwithstanding, it could not be said credibly that sports is a subject of public policy in the States.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

In comparing the status of fitness and sports at the subnational level, it seems clear that the Canadian provinces and Australian States play strong and vital roles. Their allocation of resources, formal policy making processes, discrete bureaucratic structures, and institutionalized relationships with local implementors all contribute to the existence of a true system. These basic characteristics stand in marked contrast to the situation in the American States whereby fitness promotion typically does not carry the weight of a distinct matter of governmental concern. Resources for fitness promotion tend to be scarce and concerned parties usually must act on their own initiative or forge cooperative links on an ad hoc basis, in the process relying heavily on voluntarism and an ability to identify congruent objectives.

A final note concerns the priority accorded sports by Canadian and Australian governments. Specifically, the idea of supporting amateur sports in the same manner in the U.S. is the one aspect of those systems that seems so truly foreign as to be almost beyond imagination. Observing those systems, however, points up the valid conceptual link between sports and recreation which together would appear to be the natural delivery system for fitness promotion at subnational levels.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter serves as the final element in the comparative assessment. A major purpose of the study was to look at Canada and Australia to gain a broader perspective from which to view the development of fitness promotion in the U.S. Therefore, it is appropriate to draw upon the observations made in each of the countries to point out aspects of the Canadian and Australian approaches that might be replicated or adapted in this country.

Recommendations must be made cautiously, however. Any aspect of the Canadian or Australian system which seems particularly innovative or effective does not qualify automatically as a candidate for adoption in the U.S. Factors specific to those countries may make an approach workable there, but impossible here. Therefore, the initial draft list of recommendations had to be pared back. Remaining items had to be reconsidered to be sure they are being stated circumspectly.

The major obstacle to recommending all that seems meritorious is the fact that each of the three countries has its own brand of federalism which will not change and which, therefore, must be accommodated in taking action to address specific issues. Differences between the countries have their roots in such basic issues as Federal and Provincial/State powers, political prerogatives, and financial relationships.

In Canada and Australia, the Provinces and States have a much more visible and autonomous role across almost all areas of public policy than do the American States. Inextricably bound up with this wider political reality is the relatively great financial power of Canadian and Australian subnational jurisdictions. They have control over a greater share of total tax revenues than the American States do and, thus, are in a better position to undertake social policy initiatives.

At first glance, this would seem to put the Canadian and Australian systems at a disadvantage in formulating and transmitting any national social policy. But in fact, the power of the Provinces/States has been a strength of those systems. Subnational jurisdictions are the logical switching station for the transmission of ideas, programs, and money to regional or local implementors. And, in fact, the Canadian Provinces and Australian States have been able to formulate and transmit fitness and sports policy effectively. Through a blend of political consultation and competition, Canada and Australia seem to have achieved sufficient consensus to ensure harmony between the Federal and Provincial/State levels. That consensus (which is continuously tinkered with) acknowledges some measure of Federal leadership, but establishes a careful division of powers and responsibilities.

In the U.S., the Federal government has emerged in the area of social policy, not so much as a preeminent power, but as an almost indispensable prime mover. As a consequence of wide variation in the political willingness and financial ability of the States to make social interventions, the Federal government, through a series of legislative and judicial steps, came to play a predominant role in social policy development and implementation. The key ingredient in this overall scenario was the flow of Federal dollars to States and local governments. These were the types of financial incentives discussed prominently in the preceding reports.

The subjects of this assessment - fitness, sports, and health promotion in general - have not had the advantages of being strong enough or visible enough matters of Federal policy for a strong mechanism for downward transmission to have been created. Rather, the first focus of most Federal social interventions has been to take ameliorative actions against tangible problems. This meant, for example, ensuring the provision of service delivery and treatment. In health, the complementary notion of trying to obviate some of the need for direct services

and stem the tide of rising costs has come to the fore only recently and is still in its ascendency. Unfortunately, this has occurred at a time when fiscal constraints are most severe. The prevention theme of cutting health care costs notwithstanding, resources for promotional efforts remain scarce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Federal government should work toward a more formal system of consultation with the States regarding the promotion of physical fitness.

As noted in the various reports, Canada and Australia each has a hierarchy of formal consultations between national and subnational governments. In each major program area (recreation, health, transportation, etc.), Federal and Provincial/State cabinet ministers convene, usually on an annual basis. At the next lowest level, senior bureaucrats in the responsible agencies meet about twice a year. Finally, working committees of agency managers interact on specific issues of mutual interest. The system is voluntary and consultative, but seems to be a good means of effecting a unity of purpose, identifying innovations, and developing programs efficiently. Adoption of such a system in the U.S. would assure continued attention, visibility, consensus building, and information sharing to a greater extent than the current fragmented system. This could be accomplished without prior concession by anybody regarding power and prerogatives. Rather, the idea would be to foster a cooperative process of policy and program development - vital elements in attempts to transmit national policy. The permanent or ad hoc inclusion of important parties outside government would be optional.

Factors mitigating against this approach in the U.S. system stem from diffusion of responsibility. Whereas Canadian Provinces and Australian States have identifiable lead agencies, an American State may have responsibility divided between a health agency, a recreation agency, and a Governor's Council. This

problem is not insurmountable though. The process could be structured to reach across the range of key actors or could be confined to programmatic counterparts, e.g., all health promoters or all recreation planners.

2. The promotion of physical fitness through the mass media on a national basis should be upgraded.

This assessment has noted the success of Canada's fitness promotion through ParticipAction and of Australia's "Life.Be In It" program. Both have achieved amazingly high rates of public recognition. Part of the reason for that success undoubtedly lies with the quality and imaginative, broad based orientation of the messages; it is recommended that fitness promoters in this country look at those programs. However, it also seems apparent that the success of Canadian and Australian campaigns stems largely from a high level of exposure, air time being the most important. American campaigns almost always suffer from lack of exposure.

It also would be beneficial for fitness promotion to be more coordinated. Presently, there are too many competing messages for maximum effectiveness. First, there is competition for "play", i.e., air time. Second, there is dissonance in the tone or orientation of messages. Fitness messages may vary across a range of prescriptiveness and specificity which may confuse some audience segments and leave others untouched. Canadian and Australian promotional programs seem to have followed a logical progression which began with the broadest, most non-threatening type of appeal and which only moved to greater prescriptiveness and specificity after recognition and acceptance by the public was achieved. It may be too late to start from scratch in the U.S., but programs such as "Life.Be In It" which is now underway here may provide a starting point for the many persons who remain apathetic about regular physical activity.

3. A more specific review should be made of the desirability of extending Federal financial support to national associations with an interest in fitness.

In this assessment, much was made of the use of financial incentives by Canadian and Australian governments in transmitting fitness policy. At the same time, the diffusion of responsibility and the profusion of different approaches in the U.S. also has been cited as an inhibiting factor in the transmission of policy. Thus, it would seem that financial ties to key actors would bring about greater unity of purpose. It is not suggested that other organizations be made permanent clients of the Federal government. Certainly, the kind of "organization support" given to national associations in Canada seems inappropriate and unnecessary here. It is suggested, however, that "project support" be extended under terms of contracts or cooperative agreements to achieve specified aims. The actions of ODPHP in engaging the YMCA and the American Red Cross in the production of training packages in several health promotion areas is in line with this recommendation. This approach also would seem to enhance chances for wide acceptance of policy and program initiatives.

4. Efforts should be made to strengthen ties between fitness promoters and recreation and sports providers.

In the Canadian and Australian systems, fitness promotion is done mainly with a recreational/leisure time orientation. As noted earlier and in the preceding reports, this orientation emphasizes activity for the sake of enjoyment and a general sense of well-being, as opposed to recommending certain regimens and explicitely stating a disease prevention theme. Also, promotional and programmatic responsibility rests primarily with recreation and sports agencies. Although much of the responsibility in the U.S. for encouraging physical fitness lies with health promoters, recreation and sports providers constitute the natural delivery system. More specifically, those who are positively affected by promotional themes encouraging physically active recreation should be provided with and directed to outlets for their motivation. These outlets typically would be recreation and sports facilities and programs. This connection should be

recognized by ODPHP and health and fitness promoters at the state level; close liaison should be undertaken. Collaboration between health, recreation, and sports agencies thus is important to ensure complementarity in the planning and delivery of promotional efforts and related services. Such liaison would enable fitness policy to switch smoothly from a health track to a recreation track as it travels from conception to promotion to implementation. Canadian and Australian fitness policies to date have run on single track systems without the need for switching.

5. ODPHP and other agencies should continue experimentation and refinement of approaches to health and fitness promotion at the community level.

To assume and make credible a stance of leadership, Federal policy makers need to identify best practices and make others aware of them. This also contributes to reduction of the duplication that occurs when implementors operate in isolation. ODPHP has conducted demonstration projects in a number of cities. Similar efforts and review of existing model programs, but with a more specific focus on fitness, would seem advisable, especially if more attention is to be placed on linking fitness promotion more closely with the recreation and sports delivery system.

6. Those seeking to promote physical fitness in the U.S. should look closely at the research, ideas, and program approaches of their counterparts in other countries.

This assessment has noted the value of formal consultation, as well as general information sharing between Federal and subnational governments. As evidenced by the insights and substantial amount of information acquired in this short study, it seems that both Federal and State policy makers and implementors would do well to liaise more closely across national lines, as well as with each other. Some of the persons interviewed in each of the three countries indicated an interest in learning more about the programs and materials of the other countries.

7. In addition to fostering links between health and recreation agencies and between levels of governments, the U.S. system should continue and, if possible, intensify its efforts to involve private sector parties in the sponsorship and development of fitness initiatives.

A strength of the American system observed in the assessment is the orientation toward involving non-government actors in the implementation of initiatives aimed at meeting fitness promotion and health status objectives. The President's Council has had substantial credibility with the private sector and has worked with many non-government actors who have funded programs. In the present climate of government fiscal constraints, the President's Council's approach seems both timely and efficacious. ODPHP has expressed its intention to continue this thrust.

It should be noted that the Canadians and Australians have expressed intentions of increasing private sector participation, but do not seem to have advanced as far as the U.S. in this regard.

A further consideration for the U.S. would be to try to solicit the support of the private sector for certain types of projects. In the past, the President's Council has found it necessary to work largely within the bounds of the preferences of prospective co-sponsors. The development and pursuit of a national policy calls for a more organized and proactive stance. The idea would be to channel the interest of the private sector, in some cases even moving towards pooled funding of major projects. A good starting point might be to engage past sponsors of fitness-related programs in a dialogue about the benefits of a unified approach to national policy.

8. Greater attention should be given to the development of a system for monitoring the fitness behaviors and status of the general population.

The assessment of the Canadian system revealed a concern for measuring the progress of the population in adopting fitness-related behaviors and for charting the relationship between such behaviors and health status. Sound data of that nature, collected continually, are considered valuable in setting the course

of promotional efforts. Toward that end, the Canada Fitness Survey was developed and implemented nationally.

The American system is replete with fitness-related surveys of various sizes with different foci. However, results tend to be neither comprehensive nor comparable; some efforts are of a one time only variety obviating consistent observation of trends. In addition, the major government surveys such as HANES and HIS are not equipped to treat physical fitness in detail.

Even in proclaiming the desirability of a better surveillance mechanism, it is recognized that simply funding and institutionalizing a new goverment survey is unrealistic, especially at this time. Therefore, should policy makers deem such an effort desirable, they might well consider the theme of the preceding recommendation, i.e., to seek sponsorship from one or more non-government entities. The President's Council might be an appropriate party to solicit support for such an initiative. One scenario for a cooperative effort would be for endorsement to come from several credible and visible sources, such as the Surgeon General, the President's Council, and national organizations in the areas of health, recreation, and sports. A highly visible effort with endorsement from a wide spectrum of parties would help ensure success and probably would have a bit of a promotional effect in itself.

9. Increased consideration should be given to the promotion of sports participation by the general public.

The Canadian and Australian systems provide substantial public funding for sports governing bodies, elite athletes, sports facilities, training and certification of coaches, and other sport-related items. The power of the amateur sports lobby and the strong consensus that sports, in its own right, is an appropriate concern for public policy are not found in the U.S. A theme expressed throughout this comparative assessment is that the resources devoted to sports in Canada and Australia seem disproportionately great compared with those going to fitness promo-

tion. Also, allocations for sports seem weighted too heavily on the side of elite sports, as opposed to mass participation and sports for all activities. While acknowledging the right of Canadians and Australians to set priorities as they see fit, adoption of a similar priority in this country clearly is out of the question.

Conversely, health seems to be an indisputably legitimate concern for government, one which forms the basis for most efforts in the U.S. to promote fitness. However, the observation has been made in this assessment that sports and recreation are conceptual and programmatic areas which offer a natural delivery system for the promotion of physical fitness. A promotional push in that direction would be logical and would mesh with the receptivity to sports of large segments of the public. In short, what is recommended is a "bottom-up" approach in which sports is promoted as a means to both fun and fitness, while competition and the need for proficiency are de-emphasized.